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To

All PIFAs/PCA (Fys)/Services HQrs IFAs/Command IFAs/CFAs (Fys)  
(Army, Navy, Air Force, IDS, Ordnance Factories, DRDO, Border Road, Coast  
Guard, DGAFMS)

(Through CGDA Website)

Sub: Grant of permission for journeys performed by Officers/officials in Airlines  
other than Air India - regarding.

Several references with regards to applicability of instructions related to grant of permission for journeys performed by officers/officials in Airlines other than Air India have been received from various PIFAs/IFAs. The same have been examined in consultation with Audit Wing of this HQrs office and the point wise clarification on each issue is given below for further necessary action and guidance please.

**(1) Points of Doubt:**

While availing of Air India facilities, incentives are provided by the airline by giving passengers mileage points for their travel, which can be redeemed as tickets. In the interest of exchequer, it is suggested that directions need to be issued for all users to first use their mileage points to book tickets for official visits, before resorting to their purchase

**Order on the subject:**

In Para 5 of DOP&T Circular F.No. G-14019/2/13-Cash dated 7<sup>th</sup> October 2014 it is already stipulated that "the frequent flyer reward points from Air India may be redeemed for the official tours of the Deptt".

**Clarification:**

Since the order on this subject are very clear, necessary action needs to be taken as per instruction issued in Para 5 of DOP&T Circular dated 07.10.2014 quoted above.

## (2) Points of Doubt:

It is highlighted that Sl No. 8(c) of proforma circulated from Min of Home Affairs vide OM No. 19011/9/2014-Fin.II dated April 19, 2016, covers the following provision:

- (i) Whether there is no availability of ticket in the entitled class of travel in Air India flights in that sector on the Scheduled date of travel.
- (ii) If so, kindly confirm, why the officer cannot travel in the class below entitlement on the date of scheduled travel, if the tickets are available on that date in class below entitlement.
- (iii) In case tickets are available in the entitled class on other than the scheduled date of travel, can the date of travel be rescheduled?
- (iv) In case tickets are available in the class below entitlement on other than the scheduled date of travel, why this option cannot be exercised?

## Orders on the subject:

The proforma relating to granting of permission/relaxation to travel by Airlines other than Air India was issued by MoD(Fin) vide their OM No. 34/PCPA/Cor/Fin/MO/2016/514 dated 29.06.2016. The same was circulated vide this HQrs office Circular No. 04/2016 dated 04.07.2016.

As per the "guidelines for relaxation to travel by Airlines other than Air India" included in the Annexure 'A' to MoD (Fin) OM dated 29.06.2016 "availability of lower fare is no criteria for seeking relaxation".

Further in light of Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure OM dated 07.06.2016 "non availability of seats in Executive Class would not entail grant of relaxation and the journey has to be performed in Economy Class".

## Clarification:

It appears that the case being received in Office of IFAs for grant of permission for travel by Airlines other than Air India are not being processed on the proforma issued vide MoD (Fin) OM dated 29.06.2016, circulated vide this HQrs office IFA Wing Circular No. 04/2016 dated 04.07.2016. IFAs may therefore advise the concerned officers to use the proforma issued by MoD (Fin) and process the cases in light of GOI, MoD (Fin) OM dated 29.06.2016, circulated by HQrs office vide Circular No. 04/2016 dated 04.07.2016.

**(3) Points of Doubt:**

- (i) Whether permission can be accorded where LTC has been availed by Airlines other than Air India in the absence of direct Air India flight but Air India flight is available with one or two stop
- (ii) Whether permission to travel by Airlines other than Air India can be given when it is not possible to board connecting Air India flight from en route airport on the same day (i.e. to avoid night halt) in LTC case.

**Order on the subject:**

As per the guidelines issued in Annexure 'A' to MoD(Fin) OM No. 34/PCPA/Cor/Fin/MO/2016/514 dated 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016, circulated by this HQrs office vide Circular No. 4/2016 dated 04.07.2016 and in Annexure 'A' to GOI, Ministry of Finance OM No. 19024/1/2009/E.IV dated 07.06.2016

(i) "for sectors which are not connected directly by any of the airlines, an employee must travel by Air India upto the nearest station/hub. Relaxation will be granted for the remaining segment".

(ii) "Flight with stop-overs between two destinations is not be treated as direct flight. Non-availability of direct flight is not the criteria for seeking relaxation".

**Clarification:**

Since the orders on the subject are clear, necessary action needs to be taken in light of the guidelines circulated vide HQrs office IFA Wing Circular No. 4/2016 dated 4.7.2016 and Ministry of Finance OM dated 7.6.2016.

**(4) Points of Doubt:**

As per Para 6 of Annexure 'A' to Government of India, Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure, New Delhi office Memorandum No. 19024/1/2009-E.IV dated 07.06.2016, "Relaxation to travel by airlines other than Air India while availing LTC will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Non-availability of AI flight/seats on a particular day/time would not be considered as a valid ground for seeking relaxation". However, no definition of 'exceptional circumstance' has been given.

**Clarification:**

The circumstances to be covered under exceptional circumstances cannot be defined as it has wide scope and depends on merits of the specific case. The justification and circumstances given in the statement of the case is the basis to form an opinion and approval. Therefore, the onus to decide whether referred case may be covered under spectrum of exceptional circumstances lies on the authority approving the sanction.

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